

WHO ABUSES ALCOHOL AND/OR DRUGS AND WHY?

Anyone can abuse alcohol and drugs including children, teenagers, women, men and the elderly.

Reasons can include:

- ◇ peer and social pressure
- ◇ feeling more self confident
- ◇ ignorance: not knowing the harmful effects of alcohol and drugs
- ◇ believing it helps you cope with stress and problems
- ◇ hereditary (usually children of persons who abuse alcohol and drugs will most likely also use substances)
- ◇ to relax and be more sociable

WHERE TO SEEK HELP:

- ◇ Reading materials provided at public health centers and libraries.
- ◇ Consulting with professionals such as teachers, doctors, school guidance counselors or mental health workers.
- ◇ Contacting Alcoholics Anonymous in your area.

For Information and Help Call:

1-703-533-3302

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Alcohol and Other Substance Abuse



CMHS

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WHAT IS ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE:

Alcohol and substance abuse is the overuse and dependence on alcohol and/ or drugs. Any chemical substance that causes physical, mood, thought or behavior changes is considered a drug.

Alcohol is a drug. Substance abuse includes the use of : alcohol, heroin, marijuana, inhalants, cocaine, opium and others.

Warning Signs:

If you or anyone you know show one or more of the following signs, you might be dependent on alcohol or drugs:

- ◇ using alcohol or drugs for at least one month
- ◇ having difficulties with relationships at home or at work
- ◇ getting in trouble due to legal, social or at work because of alcohol or drugs
- ◇ frequently getting drunk or high
- ◇ avoiding others to get drunk or high
- ◇ lying and denying the amount of alcohol and drugs used

- ◇ increasing use of alcohol and drugs to get the same effects
- ◇ taking risks such as driving while drunk or on drugs
- ◇ having problems at school because of alcohol or drug use
- ◇ pressuring others to drink or use drugs
- ◇ not feeling good about yourself

MYTHS AND FACTS ABOUT ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE

MYTH: Using alcohol or drugs will make me feel happy.

FACT: Most often use of alcohol and drugs makes you feel depressed, unhappy and alone.

MYTH: It is easy to control the amount of alcohol or drug use.

FACT: It is not easy. because your body will crave more and more alcohol and drugs to get the same effect it got from smaller amounts. This is called tolerance.

MYTH: It is easy to stop drinking or using drugs.

FACT: Since your body has become dependent on alcohol and drugs, you will go through withdrawal symptoms such as tremors, sleeping problems, depression, headaches and behavioral problems.

MYTH: Alcohol and drug abuse will not harm me.

FACT: Alcohol and drug abuse can cause much physical and mental damage such as mental confusion, liver disease, hallucinations, loss of memory and other serious illnesses. It can also result in loss of work, family and social problems, academic problems and if you are pregnant, will seriously harm your baby.

MYTH: I am still in control even when I use alcohol and drugs.

FACT: Alcohol and drug use can make you take risks that you may not usually take such as having unprotected sex (which could lead to AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases), speeding, and engaging in self-destructive behaviors.